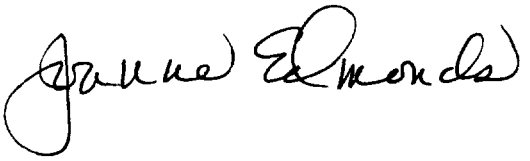
# News Flash: A Comparison of Journalists in Fiction and Non-Fiction

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

Blythe J. Rogers

Thesis Advisor
Dr. Joanne Edmonds



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**Abstract**

In this paper, I will examine some portrayals of international correspondents in twentieth century fiction and non-fiction. The literature I will use is *Scoop* by Evelyn Waugh; *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway; and "How I Got That Story," a screenplay by Amlin Gray. I will also compare the fictional journalists to real correspondents, analyzing how the latter view their own profession. I will use the following as references: *The Face of War* by Martha Gellhorn, *Live From the Battlefield,* by Peter Arnett, and an interview with ABC television correspondent Steve Bell.

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## Preface

I first came to know what it meant to be a journalist my freshman year at Ball State when I declared a double major in English and journalism. In my mind, the English major was an academic interest, and the journalism major was something I would do for fun. How wrong I was when I earned A's in my English classes and B's in my journalism classes. I blamed those less than perfect grades on the fact that I had to learn a different style of writing. After all, I could use contractions and one-sentence paragraphs in my journalism papers. Not only was the writing different, but the way one goes about research was different. In journalism, one has to "research" people, not just books. I was learning a lot about the difference between being a literary student and a journalist, yet like popular opinion, I viewed the former with more respect.

As I began thinking about my senior Honors Thesis, I decided I wanted to somehow combine both disciplines. I wanted to write a traditional paper because I felt that would be a fitting capstone of my college education, as I have spent most of my time as a student writing papers. I also wanted to incorporate journalism into the paper. With the help of my advisor, I decided to write an academic paper on the portrayal of journalists in literature: voila, the two disciplines could be combined. After researching what the fiction had to say, I decided that to make an assessment of whether or not the fiction was representative of the profession, I would have to look at how the journalists represent themselves in their nonfictional accounts of their own work. What I found out ensues here. . . .

## Introduction

This paper will look at how journalists are portrayed in literature, how they portray themselves in their own writing, and at what point these images intersect or disconnect. Literature owns many views of journalists, and for the most part, they are negative, while journalists are in a constant battle to represent themselves in a different, more positive light. Journalists would argue that literature portrays their profession incorrectly, and that they have to focus on disproving stereotypes. This paper will look at six stereotypes of journalists found in the twentieth century English and American literature and will compare them to non-fictional accounts from journalists themselves. The fictional portrayals are taken from The *Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway, *Scoop* by Evelyn Waugh, and *How I Got That Story* by Amlin Gray. The nonfiction accounts come from Martha Gellhorn's *The Face of War*, Peter Arnett's *Live From the Battlefield*, and an interview with Steve Bell, former ABC news correspondent. The discussion of the stereotypes begins with the ones that are the most accurate, according to the real journalists. As the discussions continue, the reader will notice that the journalists begin to disagree with the images portrayed in literature, and that they sometimes struggle desperately to overcome these stereotypes to prove that they are in a credible profession. What evolves from this research is the discovery that journalists are good models for characters because they have many different qualities; some good and some bad.

## Disruptive Duties

As anyone who reads the newspaper, watches television news shows, or listens to the radio knows, when news happens, journalists arrive with note pads, recorders, and cameras to witness the action and relay information. "Live, Local, Late Breaking," the newscasters announce to the viewers at home. To the journalists, their job is to tell the world what is going on around them, but some people wonder if the journalists are simply in the way. It has been said that if reporters did not flash some news stories to the public, the copy cat crimes would never happen. Keep in

mind the abundance of high school shootings over the past few years. Some say the heavy coverage of the events led other youth to perform similar crimes. Who can say whether the world is better off with or without journalists? The "globalization" of the world would not matter to people who did not know what was going on in other countries. Maybe journalists do play an important role in society.

Much literature, however, depicts the journalism profession in a negative way. In *Scoop*, Mrs. Jackson, at the Hotel Liberty in Ishmaelia, thought that journalists "were a great deal of trouble. . . . What with washing and drinking and telephoning and driving about in the mud in taxicabs and developing films and cross questioning her old and respectable patrons, there never seemed a moment's peace" (112-113). This description shows that war correspondents are a nuisance to the country in which they are visiting because they interfere with the daily routines of life. In "How I Got That Story," the reporter intrudes with the activity of the soldier, and is portrayed as a naive and thoughtless man. He annoys the soldier by asking questions such as, "Is this your first patrol?" (19), "Do you expect it to succeed?" (20), and "Are you afraid?" (20). These are questions a journalist might ask a person if he were climbing a mountain, but not a soldier who is in the middle of a battle. The far-reaching power of the press also intimidates the public and is another reason why people tend to dislike journalists' intrusive methods of gathering information. The British Consulate's words to Boot reveal that people are afraid to talk to journalists, lest they be quoted: "Now that you've stopped being a journalist I can tell you these things" (220). Literature communicates to readers that journalists are annoyances to the happenings of the world. The text implies that they would not be missed if they failed to interview the people in the news.

Real journalists do not attempt to change the opinion that they are disturbances because, for the most part, the image is true. Journalists must "interfere" in people's lives; it is the only way for them to discover the news. Martha Gellhorn was a war reporter who obtained her stories "on location,"

spending time with families and people affected by the wars. Her job required her to spend time talking and living among the people about whom she was reporting. In Madrid, Spain, she visited a neighborhood where houses stood without fronts and women had to wash clothes in a trough (29-30). The people kindly received her, and they were "chatty and glad to be alive" (29), but this does not mean that Gellhorn's intrusiveness was well-liked. Even though they were happy to talk with someone who would listen to their stories and tell them to people who did not know what was going on in the world, she was still interfering in their lives. Sometimes her intrusions were dangerous: "My presence and questions were dangerous to a tired, harmless Vietnamese, now living in dread of the police, because President Johnson can propose 'unconditional discussions' but Vietnamese, who hunger and thirst for peace, cannot" (240). Gellhorn possibly risked the lives of the Vietnamese only to send a intriguing story back to the United States. With true stories such as that, it is no wonder that people shy away when a battery of reporters show up at their doors.

**Elements of Style**

A news story must get to the point; words cannot be wasted on frivolous description or irrelevant facts. Fiction does not necessarily have those kinds of demands, but it does allow for more words. Something said in a ten inch column in a newspaper might get three chapters of a novel. There is a difference between using the 'inverted triangle' style of journalism and using a literary technique such as foreshadowing. The former asks the writer to state all of the information at the beginning of the story, and the latter asks the writer to merely suggest clues as to what will happen later on in the story.

The style in which journalists and novelists write is different, but the fiction fuels the stereotype that journalists are unable to write any other way. An example of this occurs when Bill and Jake are at the inn during their fishing trip in *The Sun Also Rises*. Bill tells Jake to be ironical and pitiful to the girl bringing them breakfast (114). Jake tries and fails. Bill says, "you can't do it. That's all. . . And you claim to be a

writer, too. You're only a newspaper man" (114). Bill suggests that to be a writer, one must be creative and crafty with words. But in Jake's case, since he is a journalist, it cannot be expected of him. He is "only" a journalist. Bill indicates that Jake has an inability to write because he has been out of the country for such a long time. Bill says that when a man leaves his country, he is unable to write well:

> You know what's the trouble with you? You're an expatriate. One of the worst type. Haven't you heard that? Nobody that ever left their own country ever wrote anything worth printing. Not even in the newspapers. . . You're an expatriate. You've lost touch with the soil. You get precious. Fake European standards have ruined you. You drink yourself to death. You become obsessed by sex. You spend all your time talking, not working. You are an expatriate, see? You hang around cafes. (115)

Jake cannot write partly because he is a journalist and partly because he is an expatriate, but also because he lacks focus. He travels around Paris from one cafe to another all day and all night, hanging out with friends. The reader is hard pressed to find him writing.

Another example of the difference between a creative writer and a journalist is shown in the way they write a newswire report. In *Scoop*, Boot is a creative nonfiction writer, which is distinct from a hard news nonfiction writer. His experience is in writing descriptive pieces about animals in the country for his weekly column. In a conversation between Mr. Salter and a managing editor of the *Beast*, Boot's poetic style is observed. Mr.Salter says, "'He is supposed to have a particularly high-class style: "Feather-footed through the plashy fen passes the questing vole" . . .would that be it?' 'Yes,' said the Managing Editor. 'That must be good style. At least it doesn't sound like anything else to me'" (18-19). He writes with description while a front page journalist, who has a word limit, writes with action verbs. For instance, when he was cabling to the *Beast*, he wrote lengthy, expensive cables, and the *Beast* wrote back, "REMEMBER RATES SERVICE CABLES ONE ETSIX PER

WORD BEAST" (173). Boot writes back:

> NO NEWS AT PRESENT THANKS WARNING ABOUT CABLING PRICES BUT IVE PLENTY MONEY LEFT AND ANYWAY WHEN I OFFERED TO PAY WIRELESS MAN SAID IT WAS ALL RIGHT PAID OTHER END RAINING HARD HOPE ALL WELL ENGLAND WILL CABLE AGAIN IF ANY NEWS. (173)

This lack of knowledge proves that Boot is not a newspaper man; he has no experience in writing in the journalistic style. At one point, Mr. Baldwin gives him help at writing a cable in order to make the men back home happy. Boot started it like this: "PRESS COLLECT URGENT MAN CALLED MISTER BALDWIN HAS BOUGHT COUNTRY. . ." (254). Baldwin took the paper and wrote, "MYSTERY FINANCIER RECALLED EXPLOITS RHODES LAWRENCE TODAY SECURING VAST EAST AFRICAN CONCESSION BRITISH INTERESTS IN TEETH ARMED OPPOSITION BOLSHEVIST SPIES. . ." (254). The explicitness of the rewritten cable shows how journalists write. They have to simply tell what is going on. Perhaps the cables are at blame for letting the grammar slip from the journalists. Less is better, and there is no such thing as a run-on sentence in a cable. Corker tells Boot that creativity is useless in journalism. He says, "Of course there's colour. Colour is just a lot of Bulls'-eyes about nothing. It's easy to write and easy to read but it costs too much in cabling so we have to go slow on that" (91). Corker claims it is actually harder to write hard-core news stories than flowery, creative pieces.

Journalists will argue that they *can* write like academics or creative writers, but that it is actually harder to write in the traditional journalistic style. The subject matter and space limitations of front-page news does not allow for the "easy" style of of literary writing. Peter Arnett in *Live From the Battlefield* says, "It took months to strip my writing of its rambling embellishments to the bare-bones wire service style that honors the basic declarative sentence above all literary skills" (58). He is expressing that he has every capability to write like a novelist, but it is his duty to write differently. It took him *months* to let go of his old style for a new, journalistic

one. Because he had to learn how to write in this new, front page style, he tries to say that the journalistic style is not easy to come by. It may look simple, but in reality it takes talent to reduce and get to the point. Arnett's defense of his writing style proves that journalists struggle somewhat to show that they can be literary people and that their writing is as worthy as other styles.

**Editorial Eye**

Censorship is a dirty word in a democratic country; however, fictional accounts of the journalism business show that censorship is alive and well within the newsroom. One might believe that only in fiction does an editor control what gets printed in the papers, but to the dismay of the people who think they are getting unfiltered news, gatekeepers do exist in real news rooms. The editor presents himself as the ultimate decision maker in these news rooms; however, the main difference occurring between fiction and non-fiction lies in who is to blame for the censorship. Although present in both, in fiction the fault lies in the writer's inability to stand up to the editor; and in non-fiction, the writer, although very aware of the injustice of not reporting on an issue, cannot do anything about the final decisions of the editor.

In *Scoop*, Mr. Salter, Foreign Editor, trying to convince Boot to go to Ishmaelia, on the behalf of the main editor, Copper, "made the reply that had silenced so many resentful novices in the past. 'Oh, but Copper expects his staff to work wherever the best interests of the paper call them. I don't think he would employ anyone of whose loyalty he was doubtful, in any capacity'" (44-45). Salter accomplishes two things in this passage. First, he defines the relationship Boot should have with Copper (a master/slave relationship) and secondly, he suggests that disagreeing with Copper shows unloyalty to the paper. Not only does it show a lack of individual thought, but it also shows that journalists are puppets in the hands of the editors.

The following conversation between Salter and Boot adds to the outrageous misguidance that the paper gives its reporters. Deciding in advance who will win the war, Salter says, "I think it's the Patriots and the Traitors," and Boot says, "Yes, but

which is which?" Salter replies, "Oh, I don't know that. That's Policy, you see. . . . Lord Copper only wants Patriot victories and both sides call themselves Patriots and of course both sides will claim all victories" (58). This quote provides the evidence that the staff will change the news to cooperate with "policy," and the quote also suggests that journalists have premeditated agendas which the news is formed around.

Does this censorship occur in real newsrooms? It does, to a certain extent. It is not as severe as Copper's insisting that both sides will claim all victories, but real editors' opinions will always override the reporters' stories. Steve Bell tells about witnessing horrible treatment of Vietnamese in Cambodia during the Vietnam War and wanting the public to view the horror as he viewed it:

> It was a massacre of Vietnamese who were rounded up and put into a make-shift concentration camp. . . .I still have images of a woman clutching a baby in her arms and both their heads were half gone. I had never seen anything like it in my life. I was in shock; the camera man was in shock, and he'd been covering the war for ten years. . . .It was clear that there was a potential for this to become a holocaust. There are a half a million potential victims, and the only thing that was going to stop it was world opinion. I literally realized that we had to get that story out. . . .I said to the camera men, "Don't hold back on this one. I want every American to vomit over their dinner when we get the story on this one.

Bell wanted the public to see this story unfiltered, he wanted it to be powerful , and he wanted it to make a difference, but when the public viewed the story, it had been altered. The content was the same, but it did not have the visual impact that Bell wanted. "I couldn't believe how sanitized it was. My camera man was right, they weren't going to show those shots," he explains. He is suggesting that the final decision about what gets shown to the public lies in the hands of the editors. They own the last word; therefore, the fiction is correct in presenting an editor who

controls the content of the stories, but the similarities end there. A challenge that the journalism profession faces is disproving that editors' opinions are influenced by the prospect of sales, and that they keep the best interest of the public in mind when choosing what to publish.

**Writing with a Purpose**

Writers write for a reason; a novelist tells a story, a researcher proves a theory, and a journalist educates the public. These motivations for writing sound honorable, but the fictional accounts exhibit inadequate journalists who are not interested in providing an unbiased account of a story. Jake is not interested in anything at all, the REPORTER has a goal in the beginning to be objective but loses the ability, and Corker wants to write only what the public wants to hear. Real reporters wrestle against the stereotypes that suggest they are unable to present an unbiased story. Journalists work to prove that they are merely the eyes and ears of the public.

Jake, in *The Sun Also Rises*, is not trying to uncover any stories or report on important, life-changing events. In fact, he does not write or publish anything at all. Throughout the story, he is never researching anything or uncovering some hidden truth. To him, journalism is a good excuse to escape from the hassle of his friends:

> I had discovered that was the best way to get rid of friends. Once you had a drink all you had to say was: 'Well, I've got to get off some cables,' and it was done. It's very important to discover graceful exits like that in the newspaper business, where it is such an important part of the ethics that you should never seem to be working. (11)

He does seem to live by that last statement: he is never seen working, although he does do some things that are journalistic, such as witness events. However, he stops short of reporting on them. One morning when the bulls are running down the streets, Jake looks out from his balcony: "They were all running, packed close together. They passed along and up the street toward the bull-ring and behind them

came more men running faster, and then some stragglers who were really running, packed close together. . . . I went back in the room and got into bed" (160). This disregard for the present news shows how unmotivated he is about reporting. The juxtopostion of the thrill and excitement of the bull run and Jake's lazy desire to climb into bed reflects his lack of journalistic skills. His character does nothing to help the images of journalists.

Known simply as REPORTER, the journalist in Amlin Gray's screenplay "How I Got That Story," is portrayed in the beginning as an objective observer. Believing in his own capabilities to find and report the truth, he says, "I don't think that belief is too much help to a reporter. What I try to do is see, then write the truth-Bob-as I see it" (4). His intentions are noteworthy in the beginning; he is a journalist to be proud of. This is how he confronts his own subjectivity: "Oh my god. He's burning. People up and down the street are watching. I am too. I'm watching (*Quickly.*) *I'm* not watching. I'm not here! I'm a reporter! I'm recording this!" (8). Trying to deal with his human emotions, REPORTER does not know how to report a story objectively when he becomes affected by the story. Eventually, he is unable to ignore his own opinions, and at the end, his opinions overpower himself to the point that he can no longer write anything objectively. In *Scoop,* Corker's purpose of writing is to give the people what they want. He explains to Boot the purpose of their news stories: "News is what a chap who doesn't care much about anything wants to read. And it's only news until he's read it. After that it's dead. We're paid to supply news" (91). These previous fictional representations of journalists' show uninterest and biases which real journalists say they do not possess.

Correspondents attempt to prove that they are unbiased observers who report all sides of a story for the purposes of fueling democracy and the education of the public. Gellhorn says about her reasons for becoming a reporting: "When I was young I believed in the perfectibility of man, and in progress, and thought of journalism as a guiding light . . . A journalist's job was to bring news, to be eyes for

their conscience" (1). However, as she grew older, her naivete about mankind changed into the belief that the lack of change in the world was a representation of the people's lack of interest rather than the journalists' failure of duty. She does believe, though, it is the journalists' job to inform the people of what is going on in the world so they can do something about it. Her belief is that "Journalism at its best and most effective is education" (3). She continues: "Serious, careful, honest journalism is essential, not because it is a guiding light but because it is a form of honorable behavior, involving the reporter and the reader" (3). Gellhorn, like the REPORTER, wanted to simply record the images in a straightforward manner. She says, "I gave up trying to think or judge, and turned myself into a walking tape recorder with eyes" (52). She promotes the idea that she is an objective recorder, someone who brings nothing to the experience to color it in a particular angle. She does not support a particular cause, but this does not mean that she was void of opinion. She has no problems giving her opinion, such as she did about the year nineteen forty: "[It] must have been the most ominous year" (67). But the difference is that her opinions were opinions based on the facts she uncovered through her observations. Sometimes even her facts were too discouraging to write about: "War was always worse than I knew how to say- always. And probably from an instinct of self-preservation, one tried to write most often of what was brave and decent" (86). Her duty was to portray the truth, not sensationalize or simply write what people wanted to hear, even though sometimes the truth was hard to write about.

Steve Bell believes that journalists who come into the profession with the beliefs that they are going to "do good" or "make the world a better place" are the ones who actually hurt the profession. He says, "I think the greatest service that we can perform on a day to day basis is to have the ability and the credibility to provide the information that fuels the democratic engine." He believes the real function of journalists is to "play it as straight as they know how."

**Questions of Credibility**

The purpose of journalistic writing is to tell the audience something new-something worth reading. If a writer is known to lie about the news, of course the readers would give his or her stories as much credit as one gives the National Inquirer or Star tabloids. Therefore, journalists try to establish their reliability credibility. Fiction says journalists should be scrutinized because they are not always trustworthy. Journalists know they must have the trust of the audience, or their stories will not effect any change at all.

According to Boot's eccentric friend, who is going by the name of Mr. Baldwin at the time of this quote, popular opinion claims that journalists never tell the truth. "It is seldom that [newspapers] are absolutely, point-blank wrong. That is the popular belief, but those who are in the know can usually discern an embryo truth, a little grit of fact. . ."(243). Mr. Baldwin has some faith in journalists that they might show a glimmer of truth, but it is a pessimistic comment at the core. The credibility of the *Beast* is diminished with the comment that Copper makes about the policy of the newspaper:

> What the British public wants first, last, and all the time is News. Remember that the Patriots are in the right and are going to win. The *Beast* stands by them four-square. But they must win quickly. The British public has no interest in a war which drags on indecisively. A few sharp victories, some conspicuous acts of personal bravery on the Patriot side, and a colourful entry into the capital. That is the *Beast* Policy for the war. . . .We shall expect the first victory about the middle of July. (56-57)

Boot is reminded later that each paper has a different policy. He says, "Isn't it very confusing if we all send different news?" (90). Corker responds,"It gives them a choice. They all have different policies so of course they have to give different news" (90). The newspaper business, according to these journalists, is run by popularity, not credibility.

It seems that journalists are in a constant battle against the beliefs that they are not credible. They are always under the watchful eyes of the readers and viewers, who will at any moment prove that they have done something wrong. The best description of how a journalist deals with the public scrutiny about biases is Arnett's story about the baby milk plant in Iraq that the United States had bombed. Arnett's credibility was the only thing that would make the audience in the United States believe his story. During a war, when nationalistic views abound, no one wants to believe that their country would intentionally or accidentally bomb a civilian factory. If it was intentional or not, the U.S. was at fault, and no one wanted to believe Arnett's story. The anchormen talking with Arnett about the story discredited him by suggesting that he was framed by the enemy, and Washington declared the infant formula production plant "was a front" (388-89) set up to disgrace the United States military. Arnett argued saying, "I could only report what I saw" (390). He calls this story the most controversial story he has ever covered (photo caption), and whether or not anyone believed him relied on his credibility to discern the truth from the conflicting information he received. It is clear that fiction depicts journalists as lacking credibility , yet real journalists demonstrate that they are credible and must work at overcoming their critics who believe otherwise.

**A Softened Image**

It takes a strong and tough person to be a front-page journalist. Is that a correct assumption? Not if the journalist is a character for a novel. The image of the rough and tough journalist is not readily found in literature. However, real journalists, in their personal accounts of their reporting desire to show themselves as tough and respectable people. They will even risk their lives by witnessing firsthand the horrors and evils of war in order to repot the news.

In *Scoop,* William Boot, although acting as a journalist, can be described as a non-journalist writer. He is a creative non-fiction writer but has no experience in reporting. His only acquaintance with the profession came from a film: "He had

once seen in Taunton a barely intelligible film about newspaper life in New York where neurotic men in shirt sleeves and eye-shades had rushed from telephone to tape machine, insulting and betraying one another in surroundings of unredeemed squalor" (30-31). Traditionally, people saw journalists the same way Boot did. "The man speaking to him was exactly the type William recognized as belonging to the film he had seen in Taunton: a short, stock-headed fellow in shirt sleeves, dicky and eyeshade, waistcoat pocket full of pencils, first finger pointing accusingly" (51). But the journalist that Boot encountered in his own life was much different from his expectations.

Waugh's description of Lord Copper indicates that journalists are not very tough. When Boot goes into Copper's office, he had expected to witness the images of journalists that he had seen in the movies; instead he saw something different. Copper's building was lavish and showy, and in the lobby stands "a chryselephantine effigy of Lord Copper in coronation robes, rising above the throng, on a polygonal malachite pedestal" (31). Copper stands as the icon for what journalists should aspire to be. Boot also found Copper's office much different than he expected:

> The carpets were thicker here, the lights softer, the expressions of the inhabitants more care-worn. The typewriters were of a special kind; there keys made no more sound than the drumming of a bishop's finger tips on an upholstered prie-dieu; the telephone buzzers were muffled and purred like warm cats. The personal private secretaries padded throughout he ante-chambers and led them nearer and nearer to the presence. At last they came to massive double doors, encased in New Zealand rosewood- which, by their weight, polish, and depravity of design, proclaimed unmistakably, 'Nothing but Us stands between you and Lord Copper.' (54-55)

The imagery Waugh uses in this description provides the reader with even more insight to Copper's characterization. The reference to "bishop" and "prie-dieu" invokes the image of a god-like figure. The phrase "led them nearer and nearer to

the presence" sounds like someone approaching something divine, and the words "soft" and "purred" provide delicate and angelic imagery. These words create an image of a journalist that the public is not used to. Copper is asking his employees (and the readers) to revere him.

The god-like image continues in what Copper has to say about the newspaper's job in covering the war in Ishmaelia. He controls it as if it were a pawn on his chess board:

> We think it a very promising little war. A microcosm as you might say of world drama. We promise to give it fullest publicity. The workings of a great newspaper. . . are of a complexity which the public seldom appreciates. The citizen little realizes the vast machinery put into motion for him in exchange for his morning penny....We should have our naval, military and air experts, our squad of photographers, our colour reporters, covering the war from every angle and on every front." (14)

His comments show that he is not in the business to look tough or to impress anyone with his news. He simply wants to make a business out of it. Copper believes that news is reported for the sake of publicity and not for the education of those who read it. He is not reporting news for a noble cause but only to sell it. He also shows that he owns the public. He can do whatever he wants with his paper. He is the god of the newsroom. "Only last week the Poet Laureate wrote us an ode to the seasonal fluctuation of our net sales. We splashed it on the middle page. He admitted it was the most poetic and highly paid work he had ever done" (14). Copper's work is not questioned because it makes a profit.

Mr. Salter's image does not show a very strong-willed and driven journalist. He does not care about reporting important facts to the public; he does not have a duty to humanity. Instead, "He thought sadly of those carefree days when he had edited the Women's Page, or, better still, when he had chosen the jokes for Lord Copper's comic weeklies... Meanwhile he was Foreign Editor and found it a dog's life" (16). He cannot

even stand up to Copper. "Mr. Salter's side of the conversation was limited to expressions of assent. When Copper was right he said, 'Definitely, Lord Copper'; when he was wrong, 'Up to a point.'"The absurdity of this is shown in their conversation. "'Let me see, what's the name of the place I mean? Capital of Japan? Yokohama, isn't it?' 'Up to a point'" (16).

Corker tells Boot stories that shape the journalism profession. One is about an American writer who creates a false story about a revolution to cover up the fact that he is in the wrong city. "They trusted Jakes and splashed it in six national newspapers. That day every special in Europe got orders to rush to the new revolution. . . .There's the power of the press for you" (92-93). The press has a huge power and it is in the hands of these journalists, who are being portrayed as not very competent in handling that power.

Jake, in *The Sun Also Rises,* is also incompetent in handling power, although, his power is limited to the news he can find, and since he does not go out searching for news, he is not in a position to influence many people. The REPORTER eventually gives up his profession, so he is also unable to influence many people with his power. Throughout the fiction, *Scoop* is the only story that allowed journalists to have any power, but even those men were not powerful in the sense that they were tough. They were powerful because they had the ability to influence society through their paper.

The journalists in their nonfictional reports actually prove to be the more hard-core, stereotypical journalists that society recognizes. The first time Bell saw the National Press Corps he was shocked: "I thought they were the rudest, most intrusive people I had ever met." He went on to say that they influenced him anyway:

> I was shocked by them, and then I spent twenty years as a part of them. You do become part of a pact and a culture. And it does act differently than other people. Gallows humor is a devise often used to protect your sanity. . .

> There have been times when I have been totally obtrusive and arrogant. But it's something that afterwards most of us feel terrible about. Give us the same frailties than anybody has in any occupation, and then add the special tension that goes with the competition of big stories and deadlines. It's self explanatory to me.

Therefore, the job itself requires that the journalists possess a toughness that the general public believes to be a fault, when really it is the only way for a journalist to keep his sanity.

Gellhorn also describes herself as a risk taker. She risks her life many times traveling through dangerous war zones. She says of one trip to the beach when the weather was beautiful and she had nothing else to do: "There was a slight snag because no one had had time to investigate the beach and the approaches to the beach for mines; but as the Poles said, if you spent your life always considering mines it would be quite impossible" (123). So she goes ahead with the Second Squadron and "climbed over a German-destroyed railway bridge, climbing as delicately as if we were Balinese dancers, stepped softly on the torn-up wooden ties and jumped prudently down the embankment and then walked very very lightly along a dusty road to the shore" (123). She calls this walking a "noble work of reconnaissance." She encompasses the personality of an unrelenting, tough journalist, an image the fiction ignores.

## Conclusion

After dividing the paper into categories of stereotypic views of journalists, I analyzed the fictional characters and compared them to the stories of the real journalists. To an extent, the fiction describes journalists correctly. Authors capture some truths of the profession while emphasizing its downfalls as artists do when drawing caricatures. Steve Bell rationalizes how fiction writers characterize journalists when he said, "The typical journalist in literature gets no worse treatment than lawyers, used car salesmen, or politicians." He feels that the public

understands the true value of journalism and believes journalistic representations in literature will not sway opinions about the credibility of the field.

My experiences in creative writing provide me with the understanding that authors do not necessarily believe that their characters are accurate representations of a particular group or occupation. And as a journalist I understand that some people in the profession do behave like the fictional characters, but for the most part, I believe that the journalists in the novels were created to embellish the plot and in no way are representative of the profession. The authors employ this depiction as a writing style. Waugh takes a common image of how journalists are insidious and makes it comical, Hemingway creates a journalist who has no direction and reports on nothing, and Gray offers an image of a naive reporter whose eventual knowledge of the truth destroys him. The fact that the three fiction writers did not use one single "stock" character as their journalist but created interesting new identities for journalists actually proves that journalists are respected by the writers-respected enough to warrant interesting characterization. If journalists were truly stereotypical characters, then each portrayal would have been similar. In account of the drastically different representations, I believe the fiction writers realize that journalism is not a profession that can be portrayed by simple characters. Every journalist is different; some have philosophic ideals and others have covert agendas, but whatever the description, the fiction reveals that journalists cannot be uniformly stereotyped. Writers use journalists as main characters because they are flexible and interesting, and the journalists prove, thorough their own writing, that they do not always fit into the categories in which public opinion would like to place them. Journalists are trying to overcome stereotypes that surface in literature and other media, and the fact that most portrayals are negative makes it even more difficult for them to gain respect; however, I believe they gain some respect simply by existing in the aforementioned literary works.

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